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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF LABOR
FRANCES PERKINS, Secretary
WOMEN'S BUREAU
MARY ANDERSON, Director

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WOMEN WORKERS IN ARGENTINA, CHILE, AND URUGUAY

Mary M. Cannon

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Letter of Transmittal

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF LABOR,
WOMEN'S BUREAU,
Washington, October 27, 1942.

MADAM: I have the honor to transmit a report summarizing the findings of the Women's Bureau staff member appointed as its Inter-American representative, who spent 6 months in 1941 visiting three countries in South America on the Women's Bureau project authorized by the Department of State.

The survey was made, and the report has been written, by Mary M. Cannon, Inter-American representative of the Women's Bureau.

Respectfully submitted.

MARY ANDERSON, *Director.*

Hon. FRANCES PERKINS,
Secretary of Labor.

In the visit of the Inter-American representative of the United States Women's Bureau to Argentina, Chile, and Uruguay in 1941 an over-all picture of the employment of women in those countries, especially the industrial employment, was obtained to learn about working conditions, social and economic factors affecting wage-earning women, labor legislation and its administration. It was proposed also to learn about the programs of women's organizations, as they touch wage-earning women, and to establish contacts for the exchange of information and publications, and for sharing assistance in mutual problems. Visits to other Latin-American countries are planned for the near future, with the same objective and to be followed by reports of the survey's findings.

Women Workers in Argentina, Chile, and Uruguay

Contrary to general opinion, women of Latin-American countries have been wage earners for years, and their numbers are increasing as industrialization develops and as social conventions change. The idea that girls should be prepared to contribute to their own and their families' support, if necessary, is more and more accepted. Since about 1920 the number of industries has been growing, but the greatest increase has come in the last few years; Montevideo, Uruguay, for example, where in 1931–32 only 582 new industrial establishments were founded, had as many as 1,127 new ones in 1935–36. This is indicative of what has happened also in Argentina and Chile.

This bulletin comprises information about women wage earners, especially industrial workers, in three countries, Argentina, Chile, and Uruguay. Distinctions are not always made between the countries. The danger of generalizations is recognized, for each of these three nations differs from the others in many respects. It is true that all speak Spanish, all had their historical beginnings at more or less the same time, all shared the struggles for independence and even shared national heroes—but each one is a nation in its own right, with its own traditions and history, its own national pride. However, there is a similarity in employment of women, in legislation, and in certain trends in the lives of women.

Indications of trends in what is happening were revealed in conversations: A young woman who has been an employee in the post office for a number of years said, "Employed girls have acquired a 'personality,' they are no longer shy and afraid. They have won the respect of their employers and fellow workers; they have made a place for themselves." Factory managers said, "Girls come from the same economic background as before, but they are coming with more education, more 'personality.'" A teacher said, "Women are accepted in the universities now without suffering the comments, the jibes, they used to hear, and there are more women than men in the Liberal Arts College of the University." A woman who is editor of a woman's magazine said, "Girls are trying to get factory instead of housework jobs now, even girls who come to the city from the provinces; those who do go into domestic service are asking for shorter hours and to live out, something that was never heard of a few years ago." At a meeting in Santiago, Chile, a well-known leader of Chilean women said, "Women are holding important public and private positions; women wage earners are alert and are already taking an active part in the political life of the nation; 25,000 girls are in our high schools each year. We have already proved our ability."

The majority of employed women in these countries, like the majority of employed women everywhere, work because of economic

necessity—to support themselves and their dependents or to supplement the wages of the head of the family. They are in the same occupations in which women are employed in the United States.

WOMEN IN THE PROFESSIONS

In the professions the majority, of course, are in the one that has been open longest to women—teaching. They hold responsible positions as principals, directors of schools, and some few are professors in the universities. A great many women teach after they are married. All schools have fewer extracurricular activities than in North America and retirement is reached at a fairly early age.

Women are lawyers, are in the medical profession as doctors, dentists, nurses, in public-health clinics.[1] Women are chemists and pharmacists; architects, in some instances working on plans for cooperative and Government low-cost housing projects. They are social workers in various kinds of positions. The barriers to women entering and advancing in the professions are serious, but many women achieve success by their ability and perseverance.

IN GOVERNMENT SERVICE

Responsible jobs are held by women in the national and local government offices, in the Foreign Consular Service, and as law enforcement inspectors. Some women are in government service as stenographers and clerks. Others do statistical and editorial work.

IN BUSINESS

Thousands of women and girls are in business and commerce: They are clerical workers in offices, sales clerks and cashiers in stores and shops, buyers and heads of departments. Telephone companies and private concerns employ many women as switchboard operators. The numbers of attractive, well-dressed young women seen on the streets going to and from work are eloquent proof of their increasing importance to the business life of their countries.

IN PERSONAL SERVICE

There are enormous numbers of girls and women in household work; many are children's nurses and governesses. Even homes of very moderate circumstances have a maid. Women are chambermaids in the hotels and operators in the beauty shops.

IN INDUSTRY

Employment.

The increase in the number of industrial plants—some of them, such as textiles, employing large numbers of women—has meant that many more women are entering the labor market.

The following table, taken from official statistical reports, shows the principal woman-employing industries in the three countries. These figures include only productive workers.

[1] The whole picture of hospital care differs from that in the United States. Few nurses have had a professional status, but educational requirements are being raised. Much nursing has been done by religious orders; now more and more lay women are in training and are practicing. Large numbers of women are licensed midwives.

Extent of women's employment in chief woman-employing industries

Argentina [1] (Buenos Aires only)				Chile [2]				Uruguay			
Industry	Total	Men	Women	Industry	Total	Men	Women	Industry	Total	Men	Women
Textiles	36, 814	13, 281	23, 533	Textiles	14, 450	6, 301	8, 149	Textiles	6, 487	2, 479	4, 008
Clothing	16, 113	7, 598	8, 515	Leather and rubber	10, 433	6, 737	3, 696	Food	17, 816	14, 237	3, 579
Food	28, 039	22, 985	5, 054	Food	17, 648	14, 921	2, 727	Clothing	3, 615	1, 365	2, 250
Shoes	14, 728	10, 507	4, 221	Clothing	3, 482	971	2, 511	Leather	3, 989	3, 133	856
Tobacco	5, 975	2, 110	3, 865	Chemicals	4, 528	2, 834	1, 694	Tobacco	991	169	822
Chemicals	11, 196	8, 058	3, 138	Paper and printing	7, 647	6, 540	1, 107	Chemicals	1, 574	923	651

[1] Censo Industrial 1940. División Estadísticas Departamento Nacional del Trabajo.
[2] Minería e Industria. Dirección General de Estadística. Chile, Octubre 1940.
[3] Censo Industrial de 1936. Dirección de Estadística Económica, Ministerio de Industrias y Trabajo. Uruguay.

As shown by the table, the textile industry employs the largest number of women in each country—with clothing and food (in Chile leather and rubber) ranking next. It is interesting to note that chemicals are within the first 6 woman-employing industries. Of the 3,138 women employed in the chemical industries in Buenos Aires, 1,845 are in chemical and pharmaceutical laboratories.

The factories visited by the Women's Bureau staff member were, for the most part, representative of the industries in which are found the largest numbers of women. In order to get as complete a picture as possible of woman-employment in those countries an effort was made not to visit the same industries, excepting textiles, in the various countries. Both large and small plants were included.

Employment of women in 26 factories visited

Industry	Number of employees		Industry	Number of employees	
	Total	Women		Total	Women
Textiles:					
Canvas cloth, rope-sole canvas-top slippers, table tennis and leather shoes	7, 000	5, 500	Men's clothing	[1]	300
Cotton and wool cloth, bathing suits, silk and wool jersey apparel	3, 500	2, 800	Gloves	130	[3] 120
Canvas cloth, awnings	1, 500	1, 200	Men's clothing	50	44
Woolen mill—Cashmere, blankets, yarn	1, 900	855	Food:		
Cotton materials	1, 017	567	Meat packing	[4] 3,500–8,000	[5] 1, 330
Canvas cloth, rope-sole canvas-top slippers, sport slippers	700	500	Chocolate	250	150
Woolen mill—Woolen cloth and yarn	500	375	Coffee and tea	[1]	40
Artificial silk	200	125	Shoes:		
Clothing:			Men's, women's, children's	[1]	80
Lingerie, sport clothes, blouses, hosiery	[1]	[2] 500	Miscellaneous:		
Hosiery	500	400	Rubber goods	700	400
			Cigarettes	700	300
			Enamel and metal	900	300
			Cleaning and dyeing	[1]	235
			Matches and printing	[1]	200
			Ceramics	[1]	180
			Crystal and glassware	[1]	140
			Soap and perfume	300	100
			Handicraft	50	50

[1] Not reported.
[2] 50 home workers.
[3] 40 home workers.
[4] Varies.
[5] June 1941.

Occupations.

Women in industry are employed in skilled and semiskilled occupations, and some are supervisors, working in the jobs traditionally held by women. In the factories visited they were working at food processing and packing; they were tending machines in a match factory; in an enamelware plant they were working at spot-welding, at metal-shaping machines, at other machine operations, and at spraying and painting.

Hours of work.

The hours of work in industry in the three countries are limited by law to 48 a week. If the plant works 6 full days a week the workday is 8 hours; when the plant works only until 1 o'clock on Saturdays the extra hours are added to the full workdays in order to reach 48. The three countries have laws called "Sábado Ingles" (English Saturday) which with some exceptions prohibit work on Saturday after 1 o'clock.

Wages.

Women's wages are not high in relation either to those of men or to the cost of living. It is useless to quote figures without giving data on the goods wages can buy in each country.

A great deal of the work done by women is on a piece-work basis and in many industries work is not steady throughout the year, which lowers the annual wage. A congressional committee in Uruguay recently made an investigation of wages and living and working conditions of the workers in a number of industries. In its report appear frequently such phrases as the following: "Women who are doing specialized work (this in a particular factory) earn less than the rest of the workers who are men." "The general characteristic is that the woman worker receives low wages, out of proportion to the grade of work she does. When the worker is a man he is paid more."

It is safe to say that the wages of women are considered as "additions" to the family income—necessary additions it is true; that is, women are not generally considered as individual workers—with their wages as the only income for themselves or their families.

Working conditions.

Many factory buildings are comparatively new and modern in construction and equipment. Instead of one four- or five-story building some plants have several separate buildings with grass, flowers, and trees between. Floor space, therefore, is ample, with few instances of crowding.

The walls are light and clean and the floors and hallways are kept clean. Because of large windows and high ceilings the natural ventilation is good. The textile plants have humidifying systems; several have ventilating systems for changing the air. There are some machines for drawing off lint and dust; the machinery generally is cleaned frequently. Central heating is not so common as in the United States, and at times the heat thrown off by operating machinery was insufficient for comfort.

The large windows provide good natural light. Curtains and painted window glass eliminate glare. In the majority of plants visited artificial lighting also is good. Fluorescent lighting is used to some extent. In other plants the lighting is poor, usually because

of not being sufficiently shaded and lights too high for individual work.

Chairs or stools, some chairs modern with good backs, generally are available where the work requires or permits their use.

The toilet and dressing-room facilities are clean and adequate, most of them with attendants. Some plants have very attractive rooms for women workers, and a few provide bathing facilities.

Nurseries.

Laws require firms to provide a nursery with cribs and an attendant according to the number of women employed. Here women may bring their babies until they are a year or two years old. Most of the nurseries are models of cleanliness, attractive furnishings, and charming color schemes. Provision is made by some companies for the bathing and supplemental feeding of the babies.

A textile plant in Uruguay has a very attractive day nursery and child clinic to which children from 6 months to 6 years can be brought. Breakfast and lunch, rest time, and games are provided for 75 to 80 children a day. Medical examinations are given and charts of the children's progress are kept. Mothers are advised about feeding and care of the children.

Safety and health.

The machinery (from Europe or the United States) is equipped with modern safety devices. Some of the industries in which the most accidents occur have safety committees and education programs.

All the large factories have more than adequate first-aid facilities, many of them with full-time nurses on duty, and doctors on call if not working a full schedule. Some companies give medical examinations before employment and some require periodic check-ups. A number of factories have medical and dental clinics, where consultation and treatment are given not only to employees but to their families. Most of the medical and dental service is free.

The following comments are from notes on a visit by the Women's Bureau representative to a factory making enamel and galvanized-tin articles and bathroom fixtures.

Women were working on punch presses, at spot welding, and spraying enamel. All machinery well protected. A safety education program is conducted for the foremen. A system of studying and classifying accidents has been started recently. Men and women doing welding and spot welding wear goggles furnished by company. Gloves furnished to those handling metal. Enamel-spray machines are in booths with hoods and exhausts.

Eating, recreation, and education facilities.

Some of the factories have cafeterias where meals are served at low cost. Occasionally women are charged less than men. Also milk and sandwich carts are used for morning and afternoon snacks. Meals are not generally a problem, for with a 2-hour break at noon the great majority of factory workers can go home for this meal.

Sports and social clubs and recreation equipment have been provided by some of the companies. The administration of these clubs is given over completely to the workers, or they are administered jointly by workers and management. The activities include basketball, tennis, soccer, volley-ball, and for the families social dances, moving pictures, picnic facilities.

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A considerable number of firms organize and offer classes to employees who want to continue their elementary school education or to study commercial and other courses. In one plant 37 employees (about 5 percent) were enrolled in classes that met each workday from 6 to 7:30 p.m. The classes included grammar, writing, shorthand, typing, history. There were three teachers, and the pupils were divided into groups as nearly as possible according to their ability. Clerical jobs in the office are filled from these classes. In a larger plant 730 women (over 13 percent of the women employees) were enrolled in factory-sponsored classes that included commercial subjects, cooking, home economics, dressmaking, machine embroidery, hand weaving, and leather work. Each year a number of girls from these commercial classes go from the factory to the office. They begin at the same rate of pay as they received in production, with increases as soon as they prove their ability. Smaller plants have a few elementary school classes.

The gas company in Santiago has an educational and recreational center where classes are given for wives and children as well as for employees.

IN AGRICULTURE

Sugar plantations and mills in the northern part of Argentina were visited during the harvest season by the Women's Bureau Inter-American representative. Hundreds of workers, men with their families (the majority Indians), are brought in from remote places to work in the sugar-cane fields. The working conditions are typical of those of migrant workers in the United States and other countries—unsatisfactory housing, inadequate wages, and long hours of work. Women work the long hours with the men, stripping cane as it is cut; they also work in the sugar mills in the sections where lump sugar is cut and packed. In Chile the large dairy farms employ women for hand-milking.

Women workers are found in the harvesting and packing of grapes, oranges, and other fruits, in the canning and drying of fruits and vegetables. Factories both large and small, situated in cities and towns in the interior, employ large numbers of women.

Many women in the interior of these countries are engaged in traditional handicraft industries—making lovely rugs and bright-colored hand-woven shawls, ponchos, saddlebags which are sold to traveling merchants at extremely low price, for these women have not learned to evaluate the hours and skill spent in making these articles. Shops selling a wide variety of typical handicraft articles are found in the cities and small towns of these countries.

IN INDUSTRIAL HOME WORK

Thousands of women in these South American countries are earning money by means of industrial home work, making not only trinkets, small utility boxes, accessories, but also household linens, men's, women's, and children's clothing and shoes—in fact, practically all clothing that is sold in the stores. Industrial home work means that there are hundreds of small shops in private houses where only the members of the family work, or where workers from outside the family are employed.

The department stores have large numbers of home workers—two of the most important stores in Buenos Aires give work to 5,000 to 7,000 home workers, of whom respectively 1,670 and 6,000 are women. In addition some of the more important stores employ a staff of clothing workers on the store premises.

Low wages, long hours, insanitary conditions, difficulties in enforcing legislation accompany industrial home work wherever it exists. Laws to control wages, hours, and conditions of work have been passed in these countries and efforts are made to administer them. Enforcement is extremely difficult, almost impossible, and one of the first questions Labor Department officials ask is what is done about home work in the United States—how it is controlled—how legislation is enforced. The Latin-American policy is to try to control rather than to eliminate home work.

The legislation provides for the appointment of minimum-wage committees, the factors to be considered in fixing wages, methods of pay, handbooks for the workers, registries that the companies must keep, health and sanitary conditions of work, inspection. The Argentine law, which was revised in 1941, gives added protection to the workers in the collection of wages.

Home-work visits were made with Labor Department inspectors in Buenos Aires and Santiago, and the process of revising the law was followed by the Women's Bureau representative during the survey in Argentina. Following are excerpts taken from the reports written about home work in the two countries.

Buenos Aires, Argentina.

I.—General observations:

1. *Numbers.*—It has not been possible to get more than estimates of the number of home workers in Buenos Aires. One estimate is between 200,000 and 400,000, with 60 percent of the number women. Shops, stores, and factories carry a register of their home-work employees, but there is no record of workers who are in turn given work by contractors.

2. *The system.*—The shops of several department stores were visited.

> (*a*) This building is new and well-equipped. The large room where home work is given out and received is on the street floor. It is divided into sections according to the kind of work, i. e., men's suits, women's and children's clothing, lingerie, and so forth. The home worker or contractor gets his assignment of work with the materials cut and with instructions for making. The company carries a record of the work given out, the wages to be paid, and the contractor has a handbook. When the finished articles are returned, they are examined carefully; minor alterations and pressing may be done in the shop.

The Labor Department has control only over the wages paid to the workers or contractors who receive the work directly. (This condition was improved by the revision of the law in 1941, which makes contractors, middlemen, and shop owners who contract for home work absolutely responsible for the payment of wages as fixed by the respective wage committees.)

Infringements of wage payments do not occur in the large shops, but are in the numerous smaller places that give out cheap material for inexpensive clothing and accessories sold in the third and fourth-rate shops.

> (*b*) In a small shop visited work is done for one of the department stores. It is managed by a man and his wife; the man is one of the 5,000 registered home workers. The workroom is a fairly large room on the second floor of their house. There were 15 employees, 6 of them women, making men's suits. Light is from small windows at the top of the room, and from doors opening to an outside passage. There is no provision for individual lights. Chairs were not modern, but had backs. The room was somewhat crowded, work was in piles. It was a slack season, and there was less work because materials were not being imported.

The inspector has no control over the wages this contractor pays, nor over the wages paid for work he gives out to be done in other homes. (This has been remedied by the revised law.) He does check on hours, and on night and Sunday work.

> (*c*) In another large and exclusive department store, the workshops that are in the same building as the retail sections were visited. In one of the rooms girls were making shirts at two rows of machines, each girl doing one piece of work. At nearby tables models were designed and made. Another large room was a workshop where furriers, the designers of lingerie and dresses, the cutters and pressers, were working. In a small adjoining room artists were mending and making wax figures. The stockrooms of materials and of finished articles were on the floor where home work was given out and received. Though the building was not new, conditions were good and there was an atmosphere of an artisan's workshop.

II.—Campaign for minimum rates and enforcement in Argentina:

In 1937 a campaign for fixing fair wages and for their enforcement was initiated and carried on by the Federation of Catholic Associations of Employed Women, advised by Monseñor de Andrea, a well-known bishop of Buenos Aires, together with trade unions of seamstresses and garment workers. The conscience of the legislature and of the public was aroused by speeches and by newspaper articles and editorials, and as a result the law was later revised and strengthened.

Wages at that time were extremely low. Seamstresses worked 8 hours, making three blouses, and were paid at the rate of 30 centavos a blouse, making a daily wage of 90 centavos. These blouses sold for 8 pesos (800 centavos) each. As little as 1.20 pesos was paid for dresses, carefully made and with trimming and pleats, which sold for 34 pesos each. Shirts that sold at 6 pesos each were paid for at the rate of 1.80 pesos a dozen. Workers made a dozen a day and furnished the thread. There were innumerable cases where only 5 pesos was received for a week's work.[2]

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[2] Figures from a publication of the Federation of Catholic Associations of Employees, Buenos Aires. "Relación Documentada de la Campaña de la F. A. C. E. y de los Sindicatos de Costureras para la Protección y Defensa de los Trabajos a Domicilio, 1936–39."

Home-work visits in Chile.

Three places of industrial home work were visited in Chile.

(1) This home, one of a long row of two-room flats, had 6 people in the family. The worker, a young woman, was making boxes for face powder. She worked 6 to 7 hours a day. Her materials cost her more than a fourth of her monthly earnings.

(2) A widow, mother of three children, lived in a "conventillo" (tenement) of one room, and was stitching the uppers of shoes. She owned her sewing machine. Her materials cost her slightly more than a fourth of her wages. Her work averaged 8 hours a day.

(3) Two young women were sewing for one of the department stores, making organdie aprons for maids. Their materials cost over one-eighth of their wages. They were worrying about the increase in the cost of thread, and its poor quality.

A student in the National School of Social Work made a study of home work in Santiago in 1941, visiting 200 homes where work was done in four trades—tailoring, shoes, boxes, and sewing.

Home workers' organizations.

Trade unions of home workers, which belong to the national labor organizations, have existed for years. They have large memberships and women as well as men are active. One federation of unions has 15,000 members, 8,000 of them women.

In addition, women earning wages in industrial home work have been organized by committees of the Catholic Church. Two examples are the association called "La Aguja" (The Needle) and the "Sindicato de Costureras" (Union of Seamstresses). "La Aguja," part of the "Federation of Catholic Associations of Employed Girls" of Buenos Aires, was started in 1918 with 18 members and now has over 1,000. The "Sindicato" is sponsored by the Social Economics Committee of Catholic Action and was started in 1936. This organization also has a large membership, and neighborhood leaders are given special training in organization work.

In Argentina the trade unions and the other two organizations have representatives on the wage-fixing committees and have worked for better legislation controlling home work.

LABOR LEGISLATION FOR WORKING WOMEN

Labor legislation affecting women in Argentina, Chile, and Uruguay presents an interesting picture. Laws in all countries prohibit women from working in occupations that are unhealthy or that contribute to immorality. The workweek is limited to 48 hours, and 2 hours a day (with some variation) is required for lunch. Night work is prohibited. Equal wages for men and women are guaranteed by law for some occupations; this is especially true in teaching and Government jobs. The Chilean law says "For the same kind of work, the wages of men and women shall be equal."

Minimum wages for industrial home work (mentioned above) are fixed by committees provided for by law. These committees decide on the wages for each type of work—in the case of sewing, for each style of garment, basing the decision on the work involved in making every inch of embroidery, faggoting, and so forth. The cost of living, the

prevailing wage, and other factors, as well as the time involved, are considered in fixing the wage.

Domestic employees also are included in the labor legislation—in Chile they are guaranteed a daily rest of 9 hours and after 1 year's continuous employment a 15-day paid vacation; the Uruguayan law requires 1 full day's rest in 7. Stipulations are included in the laws concerning individual work contracts and satisfactory living facilities.

Maternity legislation and that requiring day nurseries (see mention on p. 5) are of special interest. With some variations the maternity laws provide for time away from work before and after childbirth, with all or part of the wages paid and with medical and other assistance. The employer is required to keep the job for the worker until her return. Laws prohibiting married and pregnant women from being discharged strengthen the maternity laws.

In Chile the law provides that during the weeks of rest, i. e., 6 weeks before and 6 weeks after childbirth, the women receive half their wages; these are paid jointly under the Workers' Compulsory Insurance Act and by the employer, or by the employer alone if the worker is not eligible to receive payment under the act.

In Argentina a maternity fund is maintained by a tax paid by each employed woman on her wages, by a tax paid by the employer on the pay rolls of women employees, and, further, by a contribution from the State. A woman is given 30 days before and 45 days after childbirth, with a total allowance equal to 2½ months' pay at the rate of 25 working days a month, up to a fixed maximum benefit.

Members of a textile union in Buenos Aires have asked various women's organizations to consider with them changes in the maternity-fund law, such as the inclusion of women on the board of directors, and methods of giving benefits so that they will be used for the purpose for which they are intended.

Improvement in wages and in general labor and social conditions depends to a high degree on national legislation.

IN TRADE UNIONS AND ORGANIZATIONS OF EMPLOYED WOMEN

Trade unions.

There are large numbers of women in some trade unions that are part of national labor federations. They participate in meetings and are officers and members of executive committees. Unions of textile and garment workers, of hospital maintenance workers, of commercial and municipal employees, of telephone company employees were visited. The textile and garment workers' unions have the largest woman membership. All the unions, commercial and industrial, have worked for better legislation and have helped to secure laws establishing paid vacations, Saturday afternoon closing, a uniform hour for closing business houses during the week, retirement funds, and home-work regulations. (Laws are not uniform in the three countries, nor for all occupations.) Information in more detail is included here about the "Union de Obreros Municipales" (Union of Municipal Workers) in Buenos Aires. This union, organized in 1916, has a membership of 10,000, with approximately 1,200 women, which is in proportion to the numbers of men and women employed. All municipal employees are included—dancers and sing-

ers at the Colón (the opera), nurses in municipal clinics and hospitals, office employees, laborers.

Delegates to the executive board from the different departments or places of employment collect membership fees, report grievances, take important notices to the members. Fifteen of the delegates are women.

The varied program of the union includes improving working conditions of municipal employees (paid vacations have been secured for 70 percent of them); an educational program of speeches, classes, and a library easily accessible to members; and a biweekly news sheet. The union owns a vacation camp in the Córdoba Hills that can accommodate 180 guests, a sports club within a short distance of the city, with a new modern central building and outdoor facilities for picnics, swimming, tennis, basketball, football, "bochas," and a playground and pool for children. The headquarters building provides space for meetings, classes, the library, a medical clinic, and an office where free legal advisory service is given.

Organizations of employed women.

Some associations are definitely of and for employed women, generally organized for the protection of women wage earners and to promote their welfare. The majority of these have been organized by a member or a committee of the Catholic Church—some by the Women's Division of "Catholic Action." The organization that is best known is the "FACE"—the Federation of Catholic Associations of Employed Women. The home of the Federation, called "Casa de la Empleada" (Employed Girls' House), is a centrally located building with a chapel, cafeteria, library, meeting rooms, and various clinics—medical, dental, optical. The Federation has a thriving school of evening classes, and a social program of moving pictures, parties, picnics. It owns vacation places—one of the seashore and another in the Córdoba Hills. The 19,000 members, most of them commercial employees, are organized into 25 associations, each with its own officers and with representatives on the executive council. The Federation has a mutual insurance plan and has been active in securing legislation.

The national Y. W. C. A.'s in these countries have clubs of business and professional young women with programs that offer opportunities for their personal development and for service to others.

Large numbers of women are in teachers' associations that provide a kind of economic security as well as a stimulus for professional improvement through lectures, courses of study, and conventions. Each country has an Association of University Women with a membership composed largely of professional women.

CLASSES AND SCHOOLS

The numbers of wage-earning women in schools and classes given at night and on Saturday afternoons and Sundays are indisputable evidence of the increasingly important place women will occupy in the life of their countries.

There are night schools with as many as 800, Saturday afternoon classes with even more women enrolled. Some are finishing the years of primary school that were interrupted or never begun; others, having

completed this foundation, are in more specialized classes—such as stenography and bookkeeping, dressmaking and tailoring, cooking and catering, art, literature, history, languages, psychology.

The night classes are held usually between 6 and 9 o'clock, after office and shop hours but before dinner, which is around 9 o'clock.

Some of the adult schools are part of the public education systems; some are managed by semipublic boards, that is, self-established organizations with a government subsidy; others are offered by volunteer associations. Only the schools and classes planned especially for adult wage earners are discussed here; there are many others.

The adult schools are known by a variety of names—escuelas nocturnas (night schools), Universidades Populares (people's universities), cursos vespertinos y nocturnos (evening and night courses), escuelas nocturnas para obreros (night schools for workers), escuelas industriales (industrial or vocational schools). In many cases the instructors are from the teaching staff of the daytime schools and colleges; specialists in various fields give classes. The students of art classes of a vocational school in Montevideo had the privilege of studying under a famous Uruguayan sculptor.

The curriculum of the evening and night courses of Uruguay is typical of schools that are part of the educational system:

(1) Primary instruction—3 years—includes language, reading, writing, arithmetic and geometry, geography, history, hygiene, civics, technical drawing, general science.

(2) Students who have finished these years of primary instruction may enroll in special courses such as commercial, which has a 1-year preparatory course and 2 years of specialization including languages.

(3) The handiwork courses require 3 years after the primary instruction—1-year preparatory, which includes courses in home economics, child care, and first aid, and 2 years of specialized work in applied design, a study of color and color combinations, of materials, of tailoring and dressmaking; of millinery; and all kinds of embroidery and sewing.

In Argentina the night schools and people's universities have similar curricula. The latter are under the supervision of the National Council of Education, have a government subsidy but a separate board of directors. There are 16 "universidades populares" in the Federal capital, and 36 in the Provinces (States) of the Republic.

In addition to the night schools for workers under the National Office of Education in Chile, the university has a cultural extension department which offers classes of interest to workers. Labor law and legislation, history and geography of Chile, and political economy were included in one newspaper announcement of Sunday morning classes.

Also in Chile a government office for the unemployed has a program of classes to give needy women and men skills for earning a living. Women are taught weaving, garment making, laundry work.

Other educational opportunities.

Women employed in business and industry are offered classes by various nonofficial organizations. A number of Catholic women's organizations have workers' centers where classes are given; in one center visited 1,000 women, many of them employed, were enrolled in Saturday afternoon classes. The Women's Division of Catholic

Action in Santiago has 80 centers, with 50 as an average attendance. The Federation of Catholic Associations in Buenos Aires has a school with approximately 1,000 enrolled. A center in Montevideo called Home for Employed Girls has an attendance of 250 at Saturday afternoon classes, the enrollment reaching about 800 during the year.

Women's clubs and associations also have extended their educational programs to wage-earning women. The Council of Women in Buenos Aires has had for a number of years a school of higher education for young women. Graduates of this school are giving classes on Saturday afternoons for girls employed in factories and business. In 1941 there were 501 in classes, with a waiting list of 76. The subjects offered were penmanship, bookkeeping, dressmaking, hatmaking, typing, stenography, French, English, literature, first aid, cooking. The largest number of students, 105, were in English classes.

In Chile the committee of women working for national suffrage for women had started classes in trade unions for instruction in civics and were planning to extend their classes to other groups.

All the instruction is not academic and technical, for various institutions have classes in national folk dances, in music, declamation. There are several "little theater" movements.

The Young Women's Christian Associations in these countries have been pioneers in offering health education classes to women which are attended by large numbers of young business and professional women. Educational courses in commercial subjects, languages, art, home making, public speaking, music, have filled an important place in the program of activities of the associations.

Only women in classes and schools have been mentioned. There are similar and even more educational opportunities for men.

WOMEN'S ORGANIZATIONS

All women's organizations with interesting educational and cultural programs cannot be mentioned here. With few exceptions only those concerned with women workers will be described.

Women of the countries under discussion have not the same fondness for clubs that many North American women have; they do not go to meetings as a matter of course—they are not "joiners." They have worked in charitable and welfare organizations for years, but these have had a definite, practical purpose. Women have managed a great charity and welfare society in Argentina (La Sociedad de Beneficencia) for over a hundred years. This is no small job, for it involves thousands of pesos for a great many institutions such as hospitals, clinics, homes for the aged and for children, and direct assistance to individuals and families. Women of Uruguay and Chile are doing similar tasks.

Some of the women's clubs have committees for the study of problems and legislation affecting women, and educational programs on social problems in general. The Council of Women in Buenos Aires is a good example of such a club; it has a committee on legislation whose work resembles that of a local League of Women Voters in the United States; committees on the protection of children, public health, motion pictures, and another that does an extensive piece of work in sending books and magazines to school children in isolated districts of the country. The council offers a full educational and cultural program

of lectures and concerts, and maintains a school of higher education for young women; it also has Saturday afternoon classes for employed girls, described above.

The Club Femenino America of Chile includes in its objectives "to work for the economic freedom of women on the basis of cooperation, not competition, with men" and "to study the causes of social ills." Another Chilean women's organization of interest is the one popularly called the MEMCH, Movement for the Emancipation of the Chilean Woman. It is a cross-section organization, that is, composed of women of leisure, and of business, professional, and industrial women. The Committee for Women's Suffrage became active again last year and worked hard to get public opinion and Congress to favor the bill granting national suffrage to women, a reform strongly favored by the late President Aguirre Cerda. At the same time this group was carrying out an immediate program to educate women for citizenship.

The Argentine Federation of Women (Unión Argentina de Mujeres) was organized for the purpose of improving the status of women and the living and working conditions of wage-earning women. It has sought a practical means of carrying out its purpose by establishing a play center for young boys and girls, the children of employed mothers, in one of the crowded industrial centers. This club has worked actively on questions affecting the political and civil status of women. Several years ago it carried on a vigorous campaign against proposed changes in the Civil Code of Argentina that would have lessened rights women already possess. It has also worked for national suffrage for women.

The women's sections of Catholic Action are active in Argentina, Chile, and Uruguay and have intensive programs of study and work on social problems. They seek to educate their members through publications, addresses, and conferences. They too sponsor classes and clubs for employed women and girls.

The Voluntarias Demócratas (Volunteers for Democracy) in Montevideo are not concerned particularly with problems of wage-earning women but with civil defense and defense of the democracies. The Voluntarias Demócratas were organized in June 1940 when the Minister of Defense asked all the citizens to prepare themselves to help in case of an emergency. So many women volunteered for target practice that the officials called together representative women—home makers, employed and professional women, and students—to start some kind of an organization that would use this concern and interest. A 1-year first-aid study and practice course was taught and supervised by physicians; sewing and knitting groups were begun; and an educational program about democracy was carried on through speeches, articles, and the radio More than 400 women in Montevideo are members.

The other countries have similar organizations. The Junta de la Victoria (Victory Committee) and the Women's Division of "Accion Argentina" in Argentina, are very active. In Chile the MEMCH and the Suffrage Committee have this last year put their efforts into civil defense programs.

Some political parties have women members; thus, though Uruguay is the only one of the three countries where women have

national suffrage, those in other countries who belong to the parties that admit them—for instance, the Radical and Socialist Parties—do have an indirect part in politics, since they vote for the candidate who will represent their party. The women's section of the Socialist Party in Buenos Aires years ago established day nurseries and kindergartens for children of working mothers. A great deal of the work and financing has been on a volunteer basis. This organization also carries on an intensive educational program on pending labor legislation as the need arises.

With their names and programs adapted to these countries, international organizations are found, such as the Young Women's Christian Association, the Red Cross, the Association of University Women.

The emphasis in this report on wage-earning women in Argentina, Chile, and Uruguay is not intended to give the impression that the great majority of women are employed, that there is a general interest among women in organizations or in social problems. However, women are becoming increasingly important in the development of their countries economically, politically, and socially.

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